AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims pending

- At time of the Action: Claims 1-47.
- After this Response: Claims 28-30 and 48-64.

Canceled or Withdrawn claims: 1-27 and 31-47

Amended claims: None

New claims: 48-64

1. **(Canceled)**

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Canceled)**

4. **(Canceled)**

5. **(Canceled)**

6. **(Canceled)**

7. **(Canceled)**

8. **(Canceled)**

9. **(Canceled)**

10. **(Canceled)**

11. **(Canceled)**

12. **(Canceled)**

13. **(Canceled)**

14. **(Canceled)**

15. **(Canceled)**

16. **(Canceled)**

17. **(Canceled)**

18. **(Canceled)**

19. **(Canceled)**

20. **(Canceled)**

21. **(Canceled)**

22. **(Canceled)**

23. **(Canceled)**

24. **(Canceled)**

25. **(Canceled)**

26. **(Canceled)**

27. **(Canceled)**

28. **(Original)** A stateless distributed computer system, comprising:

a network having one or more network components to route requests from a first endpoint device to a second endpoint device and to route replies from the second endpoint device back to the first endpoint device, wherein at least one reply contains state information pertaining to the second endpoint device; and

the network being configured to maintain the state information and to reassociate the state information with a subsequent request from the first endpoint device to the second endpoint device.

29. **(Original)** A stateless distributed computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein at least one of the network components stores the state information.

30. (**Original**) A stateless distributed computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein multiple network components continually route the state information amongst themselves to preserve the state information.

31. (**Canceled**)

32. (**Canceled**)

33. (**Canceled**)

34. (**Canceled**)

35. (**Canceled**)

36. (**Canceled**)

37. (**Canceled**)

38. (**Canceled**)

39. (**Canceled**)

40. (**Canceled**)

41. (**Canceled**)

42. **(Canceled)**

43. **(Canceled)**

44. **(Canceled)**

45. **(Canceled)**

46. **(Canceled)**

47. **(Canceled)**

48. **(New)** A stateless distributed computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein state information is embodied as a data object.

49. **(New)** Computer-readable media in a network system comprising computer-executable instructions that, when executed on one or more processors, direct the system to:

route, via one or more network components, a request from a first endpoint device to a second endpoint device;

route, via the one or more network components, replies from the second endpoint device back to the first endpoint device, wherein at least one reply contains state information pertaining to the second endpoint device;

maintain the state information at the one or more network components; and

reassociate the state information with a subsequent request being routed from the first endpoint device to the second endpoint device.

50. (**New**) Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further comprising computer-executable instructions to direct the system to store the state information on one of the network components.

51. (**New**) Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further comprising computer-executable instructions to direct the system to continually route the state information among multiple network components to preserve the state information.

52. (**New**) A system, comprising:

network means for routing requests from a client to a server and for routing a reply from the server back to the client, wherein the reply contains state information pertaining to the server; and

the network means comprising means for maintaining the state information within the network means and for reassociating the state information with a subsequent request from the client to the server.

53. (**New**) A system as recited in claim 52, wherein the network means comprises at least one network component to store the state information.

54. (**New**) A system as recited in claim 52, wherein the network means comprises multiple network components to continually route the state information among the network components to preserve the state information.

55. (**New**) A system as recited in claim 52, wherein state information is embodied as a data object.

56. (**New**) A method comprising:

routing, via a network, a request from a first endpoint device to a second endpoint device;

routing, via the network, a reply from the second endpoint device back to the first endpoint device, wherein the reply contains state information pertaining to the second endpoint device;

maintaining the state information at the network; and

reassociating the state information with a subsequent request being routed from the first endpoint device to the second endpoint device.

57. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 56, wherein the state information is embodied as a data object.

58. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 56, wherein the network comprises multiple network components, and the maintaining comprises storing the state information on at least one of the network components.

59. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 56, wherein the network comprises multiple network components, and the maintaining comprises continually routing the state information among the network components to preserve the state information.

60. (**New**) A method comprising:

routing a request from a client to a server over a network;

routing a reply from the server back to the client over the network, wherein the reply contains state information pertaining to the server; and

maintaining the state information on the network while awaiting a subsequent request from the client to the server.

61. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 60, wherein the state information is embodied as a data object.

62. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 60, wherein the network comprises multiple network components, and the maintaining comprises storing the state information on at least one of the network components.

63. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 60, wherein the network comprises multiple network components, and the maintaining comprises continually routing the state information among the network components to preserve the state information.

64. (**New**) A method as recited in claim 60, further comprising reassociating the state information with a subsequent request being routed from the client to the server.